This report contains a summary of Colorado Humanities' activities since the September 2018 NEH site visit and responses to the recommendations in the closeout letter for the 2018 Self-Assessment.

**FY2019 and to-date FY2020 Activities since the NEH site visit by Major Objective**

1. Civic Engagement

   *Engage Colorado communities in important conversations about contemporary issues that reflect diverse and sometimes competing narratives to promote responsible citizenship.*

   **Museum on Main Street** planning for programs for September 2020 - July 2021 includes a series of community conversations at 7 sites statewide. A pilot of **Democracy Labs** in two communities in the San Luis Valley trained CH staff in facilitation and community engagement. Planning begins this year for **Talking About Dying, Conversations About War,** and **Resources: Conversations.** Following meetings with community and stakeholders, **High Plains Chautauqua** added a community conversation about issues related to resource extraction to their 20th Anniversary year in 2019.

2. Lifelong Learning

   *Provide inspiring humanities-based learning opportunities to encourage all Coloradans to be lifelong humanities students.*

   The 2019 **Colorado Book Awards** (CBA) finalist readings engaged 200 people live in six Denver events and the awards event attracted 145 live (and 300 Facebook Live) participants. CBA moved online this spring, with seven finalist events engaging 1,686, or over 8 times the 2019 live audience. The 2020 Colorado Book Awards celebration event pivoted twice. The coronavirus prompted us to move from live for 200 at Denver’s Evans School Auditorium to live broadcast from the Evans School, and then at the last minute, to Zoom and Facebook Live from homes the day of the event due to public protests near the site. We have over 1,700 views so far, or over 1,000% growth from live audiences. We also reached an additional 10,000 through social media impressions this year.

   **Veterans Writing** offers a safe place for military-affiliated individuals to connect, write and talk about their experiences. We have offered 50 workshops, some for therapeutic support and others to help prepare work for sharing or publication, live in Colorado Springs in September and in Pueblo since November 2019. Both workshops moved online in March and continue through the summer.

   **Colorado Poet Laureate** Bobby LeFebre is revitalizing the program with his popularity. He has presented at a large number of events across Colorado and spoken with or performed for 2,421 people between November 2019 and March 2020. He moved online with events this spring.

   **Motheread/Fatheread Colorado** (MFC) continues serving the early literacy community statewide with a unique resource for early childhood education that connects parents with their very young children’s teachers. Early educators also receive professional development in the program’s institutes. 14 cycles of Motheread/Fatheread Colorado were implemented in 13 sites across Colorado in the coronavirus-abbreviated 2019-2020 school year. The year before, partners implemented 26 Motheread/Fatheread or Teacheread class series through 21 programs in 13 school districts.

   We launched **Resources: CO Center for the Book** with the first authors speakers bureau in 2019 and will renew it this year with 2020 Colorado Book Award finalists.
Durango Living History evolved into the “Southwest Colorado Humanities Roundtable,” 12 organizations collaborating on a September history month of programs. Young Chautauqua programs continued in schools with legacy partners in 2019 and 2020. COVID-19 sped up our plans to create online History Resources for teachers as a bridge for students when schools closed, and versions were used in three communities.

Schools also continue to request our Colorado Biographies series, which earn us a small royalty each year from our publisher.

3. Racial, Ethnic, Cultural Diversity
*Develop programs that recognize racial, ethnic or cultural diversity, with special attention to Latino, African American, Native American, and Asian American experiences.*

Black History Live toured Becky Stone as Maya Angelou in 2019 (2,282 participants) and as Rosa Parks in 2020 (1,174). Latino Heritage Live, planned, funded and implemented with a group of partners led by the Hispanic Affairs Project in Grand Junction attracted 397 people to six community events. Race and Ethnicity planning in Denver was completed but not funded. We anticipate new partnership opportunities to further discourse on race. Native Peoples program will begin with meetings with its original creators to plan implementation.

4. Geographic Diversity (rural-urban)
*Develop programs with geographic diversity and with specific emphasis on issues of import to rural Coloradans.*

Colorado Book Awards, Colorado Poet Laureate, Resources: CO Center for the Book, Conversation, and History, and Veterans Writing are being developed to serve the state more broadly with live and online programs. We developed an advisory council made up of individuals from every region of the state to help develop the Five States of Colorado film. The Museum on Main Street tour of Crossroads: Change in Rural America and associated programs will occur in 7 rural communities.

5. Expand Humanities Disciplines
*Develop programs that employ as broad an array of the humanities disciplines as possible and promote a holistic examination of what it means to be human.*

Advisors for Museum on Main Street are economics scholars specializing in rural economic development. Democracy Labs engages facilitators from a variety of backgrounds, as will other conversation programs.

6. Partnerships
*Build partnerships to promote collaboration with existing and prospective program partners to develop humanities programs throughout the state.*

Plans to engage Colorado Poet Laureate Bobby LeFebre to forward our Latino Heritage Live work are in place. Two Rivers Chautauqua, now Colorado West Chautauqua, leveraged interest in local history and presenters successfully in 2019.

We continually renew and seek new partners in all our efforts, working with over 100 around the state to design, market, implement, and evaluate programs. Regional Networks received a boost from the successful model in Durango, with CH board members who lead that collaboration willing to share their best practices with other networks as they form around the state. We were planning visits to engage communities interested in Regional Humanities Networks this summer, but coronavirus delays this outreach for now.

7. Capacity Increase
Increase Colorado Humanities financial capacity and resources to achieve our objectives.

The Development Committee has focused on ways to engage board members’ networks to create relationships leading to funding. Staff continue to pursue new grant opportunities. We formed an ad hoc Marketing Committee who is working on a video production project to support program outreach and fundraising through social media.

8. Technology
Use a range of technologies to deliver and promote our programs.

Coronavirus has provided motivation for us to move online with as many programs as we can. Those with online reach now are Colorado Book Awards, Colorado Poet Laureate, Resources: CCftB, Colorado Encyclopedia. Colorado Encyclopedia continues to offer its resources, with project leadership transitioned to Colorado State University Libraries, attracting 305,888 users in 2019. With the help of marketing and video production professionals on our board, we continue to expand our social media marketing capabilities. We launched a new website in____ which__________

9. Ambassadors All
Extend the reach of Colorado Humanities Board and staff members statewide as ambassadors for Colorado Humanities.

Board members have hosted small events and introduced the organization to business and community leaders. We are providing tools to help them promote the organization and programs through their own networks. Staff continue to reach out to organizations, associations and communities, and participate in gatherings such as the Voices of Rural Colorado conference.

Responses to Recommendations in Self-Assessment Closeout Letter

Explore state funding
Colorado state funding is governed by the TABOR amendment, a tax-payers bill of rights, that limits the legislature’s ability to assess taxes and allocate funds. As Colorado Humanities is not a state agency, it cannot receive a direct appropriation from the state budget. Our Board Chair and Executive Director met with the State Treasurer to gain some insights and direction. He suggested: work with agencies that have missions such as serving rural Colorado; think about groups that can be advocates for funding; research lesser known sources of funds such as unclaimed property. We will schedule meetings with key people as appropriate. However, unprecedented cuts are anticipated in the 2020-21 state budget due to the effects of the pandemic.

Offer a grants program
Staff attended informative sessions at the National Humanities Conference, surveyed and met with other state humanities council staff to learn about the grants landscape. Board and staff discussed the ways in which we could include a grants component in some existing or planned programs, and some RFPs are proposed in the 2021 Program Plan.

Key staff succession plan
The Nominating and Governance Chair and Executive Director have reviewed the current succession plan and will work with the Committee to develop an updated plan.